

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 10-12, 20-22 and 27 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27 are amended. Support for amendment to claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27 may be found in the specification at least page 4, lines 18-21 and page 18, lines 14-15, and Figs. 2 and 7 and the corresponding description.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Pappas in the personal interview held May 23, 2006, are appreciated. Specifically, claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27 are amended to comply with the Examiner's helpful suggestions made during the interview. Applicant's separate record of the substance of the interviews is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. The Claims Satisfy the Requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph.

The January 11, 2006 Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 10-12, 15, 16, 20-22 and 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. The rejection is moot with respect to canceled claims 5, 6, 15, 16, 25 and 26, and respectfully traversed with respect to claims 1, 2, 10-12, 20-22 and 25-27.

During the personal interview, Examiner Pappas requested clarification for "depth cueing area being set unrelated to a size and a shape of the object." By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27 are amended to clarify this feature by reciting "the depth cueing area being set based on a position of the viewpoint." Support for this feature may be found at least page 4, lines 18-21 and page 18, lines 14-15, and Fig. 2 and the corresponding description. Fig. 2 of the instant application clearly shows that the depth cueing area is set with reference to a position of the viewpoint.

Moreover, the depth cueing processing may be performed based on the Z-value (page 4, lines 18-21). The Z-value is a distance from a position of the viewpoint (page 18, lines 14-

15), and therefore it is possible to perform the depth cueing processing based on the Z-value. Thus, the depth cueing area is set based on a position of the viewpoint.

Moreover, Fig. 7 of the instant application indicates that the processing of judging whether or not the Z-value is within the depth cueing area at step S3. Step S3 sets the depth cueing area as the range of the Z-value and judges whether or not the Z-value for each object is a value within the Z-value, which specifies the depth cueing area. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that the written description supports the feature, "the depth cueing area being set based on a position of the viewpoint," as recited in independent claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27.

Thus, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27 satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Further, claims 2, 12 and 22, which variously depend from independent claims 1, 11, and 21, satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to these claims. Withdrawal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The January 11, 2006 Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 10-12, 15, 16, 20-22 and 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Foley ("Computer Graphics: Principles And Practice") in view of Deering (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2003/0011618A1), and further in view of Griffin (U.S. Patent No. 5,990,904). The rejection is moot with respect to canceled claims 5, 6, 15, 16, 25 and 26, and respectfully traversed with respect to claims 1, 2, 10-12, 20-22 and 27.

As discussed during the personal interview, claims 1, 2, 10-12, 20-22 and 27 would not have been rendered obvious by Foley in view of Griffin. As agreed upon during the personal interview, none of the applied references teach or suggest "varying a depth cueing

value for each vertex...; varying the alpha value for each vertex..., " as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 11 and 21.

Further, none of the applied references teaches or suggests "the depth cueing area being based on a position of the viewpoint," as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27. By setting the depth cueing area based on a position of the viewpoint, the depth cueing area may be set irrespective of the shape and the size of an object because the shape and the size of an object does not change depending on a position of the viewpoint.

Foley only discloses the use of bounding boxes for identifying overlapped objects. The identification of overlapped objects using bounding boxes depends on the shape and size of an object. Further, Foley discloses clipping which is executed whether an object hides within a screen or not, which depends on the object size. Thus, Foley does not disclose "the depth cueing area being set based on a position of the viewpoint."

Deering and Griffin do not remedy this deficiency of Foley. Deering is cited by the Office Action for only its alleged teaching of varying an alpha value. Griffin is cited by the Office Action for only its alleged teaching of sorting objects of which alpha values are varied. Thus, Deering and Griffin do not disclose setting the depth cueing area being set based on a position of the viewpoint, as recited in independent claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27.

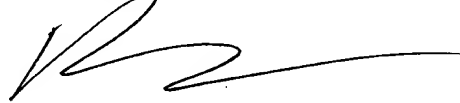
Thus, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 10, 11, 20, 21 and 27 are patentable over Foley, Deering and Griffin. Further, claims 2, 12, and 22, which variously depend from claims 1, 11, and 21, are also patentable over Foley, Deering and Griffin for at least the reasons discussed with respect to the independent claims, as well as for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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